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ABSTRACT

This action research project sought to increase parental involvement in targeted kindergarten classrooms. Evidence for the problem included the lack of family attendance at school functions, declining membership in the parent-sponsored Booster Club, and lack of parental support for school policies. The project focused on three areas of parental involvement: improving communication, creating an inviting school climate, and providing parent resources. Implemented interventions included weekly newsletters for parents, a message board, a school activity calendar, special school activities, and parent resources. In order to assess the effects of the interventions, surveys and questionnaires were used, parent attendance at school activities was recorded, and a log of classroom volunteer hours was kept. Post-intervention data indicated that parent involvement was increased. (Twenty-three appendices include a sample calendar and parent activity notices. Contains 17 references.) (EV)

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# IMPROVING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT THROUGH SCHOOL SPONSORED EVENTS

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

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# ABSTRACT

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Improving Parental Involvement Through School Sponsored Events

This report described a program for increased parental involvement for the students of the targeted kindergarten classrooms. Evidence of the existing problem included the lack of family attendance at school functions, declining membership in the parent sponsored Booster Club, and lack of parental support for school policies.

Researched literature concerning parental involvement in schools illustrated factors which contributed to the problem. These factors included changes in the family structure, time constraints placed on working and single-parent families, and undefined expectations for parental roles in education. Experts in the field of parental involvement have indicated possible solutions to address the problem. These included creating an open line of communication between the home and the school, creating an inviting school climate, and establishing parent resources to strengthen their efforts in supporting their child's education.

This action plan implemented interventions designed to increase parental involvement. The interventions included weekly newsletters, message board, school activity calendar, planning and implementing special school activities, and making parent resources available.

The action research team explored a defined approach for increasing parent involvement in the targeted kindergarten classrooms. The post intervention data indicated that parent involvement was increased through the use of meaningful interventions, clear and defined expectations, open lines of communication and building active partnerships between parents and school.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | |
|---|---|
| CHAPTER 1 - PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT | 1 |
| General Statement of the Problem | 1 |
| Immediate Problem Context | 1 |
| The Surrounding Community | 3 |
| National Context of the Problem | 4 |
| CHAPTER 2 - PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION | 6 |
| Problem Evidence | 8 |
| Probable Cause | 8 |
| CHAPTER 3 - THE SOLUTION STRATEGY | 11 |
| Literature Review | 11 |
| Project Objectives and Processes | 16 |
| Project Action Plan | 17 |
| Methods of Assessment | 21 |
| CHAPTER 4 - PROJECT RESULTS | 22 |
| Historical Description of the Intervention | 22 |
| Presentation and Analysis of Results | 26 |
| Conclusions and Recommendations | 31 |
| REFERENCES | 34 |
| APPENDIXES | 36 |
| Appendix A - Staff Survey | 36 |
| Appendix B - Parent Survey | 37 |
| Appendix C - Student Survey | 38 |

Appendix D - Picture of Banner 39

Appendix E - Picture of School Calendar 40

Appendix F - Picture of Outdoor Sign 41

Appendix G - Information Packets 42

Appendix H - Parent Pledge 52

Appendix I - Interest Inventory Survey 53

Appendix J - Parent Workshop Notice 54

Appendix K - Fall Family Festival Notice 55

Appendix L - First Family Reading Night Announcement 57

Appendix M - Second Family Reading Night Announcement 58

Appendix N - Third Family Reading Night Announcement 59

Appendix O - Parent Conference Thank You 60

Appendix P - Parent Luncheon Announcement 61

Appendix Q - Pictures of Parent Luncheon 63

Appendix R - Skating Party Announcement 65

Appendix S - Pictures of Skating Party 66

Appendix T - Career Day Announcement 68

Appendix U - Weekly Newsletter 70

Appendix V - Homework Activity 72

Appendix W - Parent Resource Idea 73

# CHAPTER 1

# PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

## General Statement of the Problem

The parents of the targeted school exhibited a lack of interest and motivation in attending school events. This pattern of behavior affected students' attitudes about school and caused a lack of respect towards teaching staff. It also reflected some negativity in grades and the students' general outlook on education. Evidence for the existence of the problem included attendance records from school scheduled events, anecdotal records of the parent coordinator, and student and teacher surveys.

## Description of Local Setting

The targeted school had 425 students enrolled in kindergarten through sixth grade. The building opened in 1971 as a neighborhood school. The school was a school-wide Title I facility. Each grade level consisted of two or three heterogeneously grouped classrooms. The average class size was 23 students. The student population was 89.4 percent Caucasian, 7.5 percent African American, 2.8 percent Hispanic and 0.2 percent Asian. Student attendance rate was 94.4 percent with mobility among students at 14.5 percent. Chronic truants numbered 9.6 percent.

The targeted school was administered by a full-time principal. The staff consisted of 25 certified teachers. This number included 15 classroom teachers, two specialists in

physical education and music, one Title I teacher, two special education teachers, three special education aides, and a speech and language clinician.

There were two intervention teams that supported staff, students, and parents. The diagnostic team consisted of a school nurse, a school psychologist and a social worker. The Teacher Assistance Team consisted of one administrator, one building supervisor, and four regular education teachers.

Office staff consisted of a full-time secretary. The library was run by a full-time aide. The computer laboratory was run by a certified teacher. The school was serviced by two full-time building custodians. Lunch was served by four food-service employees. Fifth grade students participated in the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) sponsored by the local police department. Fifteen community volunteers visited assigned classrooms one month out of each school year. The primary staff had received extensive training in Direct Instruction. This program, as well as whole language, placed an emphasis on Language Arts. The mathematical program used manipulatives and centered around cooperative learning. The School Improvement Team worked to align curriculum and state standards. Other instructional strategies for the building were special education inclusion into the regular classrooms and the T.A.T. that helped develop individualized student plans for learning. Monthly staff development, such as guided reading, peer counseling, and school improvement, as well as grade level planning, provided an important learning foundation for the building.

The targeted school enrollment included 48.5 percent low income families. Low income students were from families receiving public aid, living in institutions for

neglected or delinquent children, being supported in homes, depending on public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced-priced lunches.

## Description of Surrounding Community

The targeted school district was located in a large metropolitan area. The area was divided by a river in the western region of the state. The community served a population of 40,680 people. Of this total, 51% were female and 49% were male. The city in which the targeted school was located is in a middle class community with a prosperous economy. The unemployment rate for the community was 6%. The major employment opportunities included such areas as manufacturing agricultural equipment, production of footwear, selling of insurance, and food processing industries. One of the largest employers was a major government agency. The median household income was $27,200 annually. The median age was 34 years. The ethnic make up of the city was 79% White, 18% African American, 2.5% Hispanic, and .5% Asian. Located within the city was a four-year college and a two-year junior college. The area also offered many cultural and entertainment choices such as museums, a zoo, a civic center, several professional sports teams, drama, and musical events.

The targeted school district served 7,000 students and employed 430 teachers with a 19 to 1 pupil to teacher ratio. The average experience of teaching was 15.4 years. The ethnic background of teachers was 91.3% White, 7.5% African American, and 1.2% Hispanic. The ethnic background of students in the district was 62.7% White, 30.8% African American, 5.6% Hispanic, and 7% Asian. The district included an interdistrict preschool, Head Start, 12 elementary schools, 2 junior high schools, a high school, and an alternative school.

## National Context of the Problem

"The single most determinant of a child's success in school, and ultimately throughout life, is not family status, education level, income, or I.Q. It is whether that child's family is involved in his or her education." (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1996, pg. 24). Parental involvement is not only an issue at the local level, but has gained national attention through professional journals, magazines, newspapers, and television talk shows.

Many studies have been done to encourage parental involvement. One such study from the Highland Upward Bound Program (1995) described a relationship between children whose parents were involved in their education and success in school. This study also showed the following statistics: Of the 94% of students who went on to college from 1991-95, 54% had parent involvement; of the 6% that did not go to college, there was little parental involvement. Of the students that were still in college, 83% had parental involvement. Of the students who dropped out of college during this time period, 77% had little or no parent involvement (Highland Community College, 1995).

Other researchers have found a need to go beyond examining a relationship between parent involvement and educational outcomes. They, instead, sought to determine what leads parents to become involved in the first place. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1993) found three factors that influence parents' willingness to become involved in their children's schooling. The factors were the parents' belief that it was their responsibility to be involved, that they had an impact on their children's education, and that the children and school welcomed their involvement.

By not getting involved in their childrens' education, parents may be sending a message to their children that school is not highly valued. Knowing the curriculum and familiarizing themselves with teachers and administrators may promote educational success.

# CHAPTER 2

# PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

## Problem Evidence

Schools cannot achieve their highest level of excellence unless parents are directly involved. As reported by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (1996), the single-most important determinant of a child's success in school, and ultimately throughout life, is not family status, education level, income or Intelligence Quotient. It is whether that child's family is involved in his or her education (pg. 25). The most effective time to set a child on a positive path is at a young age. Steinberg (1996) has found that children whose parents are disengaged have the poorest developmental patterns, lacking psychological maturity, social competence and self-esteem. The problems encountered by these youngsters, in school and out, multiply throughout the school years (pg. 23).

The targeted elementary school was experiencing a decrease in parent involvement, which affected the parents' attitudes toward school. Evidence for the existence of the problem included the lack of family attendance at school events, declining membership in the parent-sponsored Booster Club, and lack of parental support for school policies. The targeted population consisted of all of the kindergarten students in this elementary school.

The lack of family attendance at school events was evident by sign-in records kept from September 1998 to May 1999. Two events that illustrated this problem were the Kindergarten You and Me Days and the Family Reading Night. The You and Me Day was a monthly program developed for kindergarten students and their parents. The targeted population consisted of 65 kindergarten students. Table 1 indicates the attendance at those activities.

Table 1

Kindergarten You and Me Day Family Attendance

| Month | Number in Attendance | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| September | 14 | 22% |
| October | 11 | 17% |
| November | 20 | 31% |
| January | 10 | 15% |
| February | 23 | 35% |
| March | 20 | 31% |
| April | 15 | 23% |
| May | 13 | 20% |

School records also indicated that 25% of the eligible student population and their parents attended the Family Reading Night held early in November.

The lack of active participation in the parent-sponsored Booster Club was evident in the low number of parents who attended monthly meetings. The importance of those meetings was reflected in the numerous programs, activities, and projects that were designed for the students. One impact that directly affected the students was the elimination of the spring frolic due to the lack of parent volunteers.

Teachers in the targeted school have noticed a decline in parental support for school policies. On a frequent basis, teachers and administrators were challenged on decisions made regarding discipline and homework. The lack of cooperation on those

issues created negative feelings between faculty members and parents. This had a direct impact on students' attitudes toward school and respect for authority.

## Probable Causes

The targeted school had experienced dramatic change in family settings. The number of single-parent families had increased as well as the number of non-working parents. A growing number of extended families had developed, resulting in grandparents who were the primary caregivers. These factors impacted the extent of parent involvement within the targeted school.

While recognizing the importance of parental involvement, it is also necessary to acknowledge that many parents may experience feelings of inadequacy. Many parents may not have the skills necessary to help their children form positive learning and socialization habits. Many parents lack formal education training, which can make the communication between home and school difficult. Parents who did not have a positive school experience themselves may feel uncomfortable approaching their children's teachers. Others may have felt unwelcome at their children's school in the past. These factors can be an obstacle in parents' goal t be active partners in their child's education.

Finding a way to make parental involvement a successful experience for both parents and teachers can be difficult. Schools often fail to provide a welcoming climate, inviting parents into the school. This may cause negative feelings in parents toward wanting to help. Teachers may not always provide appropriate opportunities for parents to assist in the classroom. On the other hand, parents are not always willing to accept an invitation to help when it is offered. Teachers often view this behavior as apathetic. In

order for those feelings to be diminished, numerous opportunities for meaningful involvement must be created.

Researchers have found several underlying causes for the lack of parental involvement. Elements of present family life stood in the way of parents participating in their children's education. Time is the single greatest barrier to parental involvement. Thirty percent of parents say they "feel frustrated because I can't find enough time to help my children with school." Another 23% cite the difficulties created by the demands of raising other children (Kiley and Martilla, 1995). Parents recognize the need to be active participants in their children's lives. According to a Newsweek PTA poll, some 40% of parents across the country believe they are not devoting enough time to their children's education (Finney, 1993). Teachers were also pressed for time. Although increased contact with parents through conferences and phone calls would undoubtedly be beneficial, the teachers' time may also be limited due to family commitments.

Another issue addressed in the research was that parents feel reluctant to become involved because they themselves did not do well in school. The importance of their involvement, however, cannot be understated. When parents were asked about school involvement, they cited work responsibilities, health problems, and economic differences between themselves and teachers. According to Epstein (1990), "Parents also said they felt that teachers looked down on them for not being as successful as teachers, (pg.3).

Many times parents would be more inclined to actively participate in their child's learning activities if teachers were willing to provide more guidance. The power of gathering people to build relationships cannot be overlooked. Relationships enhance our efforts toward school improvement. Everyone must be heard, and everyone must learn

together. It is on this foundation that schools work to build partnerships and trust rather than dictation and suspicion (Cavaretta, 1998).

The education and socialization of children are a shared responsibility of both parents and teachers. Addressing the differences that may form between parents, teachers, and children by using effective communication, respect, tact, and good humor may help make school a pleasant place.

Many factors have contributed to the decline of parental involvement at the targeted school. The changes in the family setting as known in the traditional sense have impacted the level of involvement. These changes include a rise of dual-working parents, single-parent families, and extended family members as primary caregivers. Parents also have many personal issues that can reflect their lack of involvement such as the absence of necessary skills, lack of formal education, and feelings of intimidation within a school setting. Parents need to feel needed, and schools need to promote an environment in which parents are valued.

# CHAPTER 3

# THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

## Literature Review

Upon review of the literature three specific factors were identified as the primary focal points of the solutions strategy: communicating, creating an inviting school climate, and establishing parent resources. According to Epstein (1987), "The evidence is clear that parental encouragement, activities, and interest at home and participation at schools and in classrooms affect children's achievements, attitudes, and aspirations, even after student ability and family socioeconomic status are taken into account." (Pg. 1 )

The fact remains that educators may be the experts in child development issues and how children's lives are affected by learning, but parents are the experts in knowing their children's individual personality and needs. Teachers and parents must be present to produce a constructive relationship that helps children achieve their highest potential.

The first factor of parental involvement was to address the need of an improved method of home-school communication. Effective parental involvement begins with communication. It is necessary and important for parents to share in the decision making processes that affect their children. When parents and teachers communicate about education, everyone involved benefits, especially the children.

Experts assert that the lack of information sent between home and school may be the source of discord between teachers and parents (Jennings, 1990). Many diverse methods should be implemented to improve home-school communication. Communication included: individual homework and newsletter folders, a Homework Hotline, student-parent handbook, monthly school newsletter, written communication between teacher and parent, positive and periodic telephone calls, and parent-teacher conferences (Hester, 1989). Just as the child goes two ways, between school and home, so does the communication. There are various methods that administrators and teachers can use to encourage parents to become an active member of their children's educational team. For example, parent helpers can be invited into the classroom, parents can be encouraged to join the booster club, and parents can be utilized to assist at school activities.

The second factor that affects parental involvement is the need to create an inviting school climate. A study involving more than 3,000 parents and 307 teachers in six San Francisco area schools found that almost 80 % of teachers agreed that many parents felt out of place at school (Clark, 1988). How schools say "Welcome!" sets the tone for education in their communities. According to a survey, approximately 50 family members from several Wisconsin school districts expressed what information they would consider the most beneficial in helping their children learn. This survey showed families want to feel a sense of belonging. They do not want to feel shut out, but welcomed into their children's schools. Parents would like the school to take a more active role in asking for input without intimidation (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1993).

Do parents ultimately belong in our schools? Some individuals feel parents have no place in the schools. These people include staff who affirm that no adults other than the teacher belongs in the classroom, as well as parents who feel ill at ease about the school's way of life (Rich, 1988).

However, researchers have shown that the benefits of parental involvement are numerous. These include: more positive views of both teachers and parents, increased parental support of children and school issues, and increased confidence in parents' ability to help their children (Liontos, 1992).

In order to promote a more positive school climate, Galen (1991) suggested the following points should be considered:

- Promote an environment in which parents are valued as primary influences in their children's lives and are essential partners in the education of their children.
- Recognize that the self-esteem of parents is integral to the development of the child and should be enhanced by the parents' positive interaction with the school.
- Include parents in decision making about their own children and on the overall early childhood programs.
- Ensure opportunities and access for parents to observe and volunteer in the classroom.
- Promote exchange of information and ideas between parents and teachers which will benefit the child (Pg. 18).

Welcoming parents into the school is the first step; giving them the resources needed to be an effective partner in the learning process is the second step.

All parents have the capacity to learn developmental and educational techniques to help their children. With this being noted, the third factor that affects parental involvement is to provide readily available resources to all parents. Teachers must be academic sharers, explaining the curriculum, teaching methods, and how parents can reinforce learning at home (Rich, 1997). Researchers have shown the benefits of educating parents include: a rise in parent's self confidence, a better understanding of school policies, a clearer identification of teacher's role, a greater level of comfort in school interactions (Epstein, 1994).

Family involvement is crucial to the success of children. A survey conducted by Martilla and Kiley (1995) found that 32 % of all parents say they find it hard to help their children because "They teach things a lot differently from when I was in school." One out of 5 parents or 21 % say they would be more involved if they knew how to go about it. In order to support parents' willingness to assist in their children's learning there are many resources that could be provided. Family and parent workshops can be created which can be directed to school goals. Adult education programs and monthly seminars on topics of interest can be organized to help support parents efforts. A parent room can also be established to provide a leading library of resources for parents (Jennings, 1990).

Children do best when their parents are enabled to play four key roles in their learning: A teacher of children's learning experiences, a supporter of children's goals, an advocate of children's issues, and a decision maker for children's education.

All three factors: communicating, creating an inviting school climate, and providing parent resources are essential in promoting parental involvement within a

school. It is ultimately the school's responsibility to empower parents so that they may reflect a sense of accomplishment, (Cavaretta, 1998):

> My work counts.
>
> My voice is heard.
>
> I've made a difference for my children (Pg. 15).

As a result of the review of the professional literature, the researchers focused on an open line of communication, creating an inviting school climate, and establishing parent resources. To encourage open communication between home and school weekly newsletters will be sent home with the targeted students. A message board and school activity calendar will be displayed for the benefit of the entire school population. To make parents feel welcomed into the building, a positive wall display will be placed in the school lobby and parents will be given opportunities to volunteer in the classroom. To assist parents when working with their children at home parent workshops will be offered, Family Reading Nights, and Kindergarten You and Me Days will be organized.

# Project Objectives and Processes

## Objective 1

As a result of implementing a more effective form of parent-teacher communication during the period of September 1999 through February 2000 the parents and teachers will increase school- home communication as measured by the number of parents who sign the parent involvement pledge, and responses to the parent survey.

In order to accomplish this objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Distribute parent pledge
2. Send home a weekly newsletter
3. Use the message board in the school yard to provide information.
4. Use the wall calendar in the school lobby to display school events.

## Objective 2

As a result of establishing a positive and inviting school climate parents of the targeted kindergarten children will increase their willingness to participate in school activities. The level of involvement will be measured by the number of parents who attend the planned school activities.

In order to accomplish this objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Distribute a volunteer interest inventory.
2. Make available a list of activities for parents to volunteer.
3. Provide classroom opportunities for parents to help or share.

## Objective 3

As a result of providing information and ideas to families about how to help their children at home with curricular-related activities, during the period of September 1999 through February 2000, the faculty will increase opportunities for parent and child learning, as measured by attendance at various learning functions and surveys distributed to both parents and students.

In order to accomplish this objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Provide a list of resource materials that are available to check out.
2. Send home weekly curriculum ideas and activities to work on at home.
3. Provide a Family Reading Night
4. Organize monthly kindergarten You and Me Days
5. Organize parent workshops to assist them in their child's learning.

## Project Action Plan

This action plan is designed to increase parental involvement in the targeted kindergarten classrooms. The action plan focused on three areas of parental involvement: communication, creating an inviting school climate, and providing parent resources. The action plan covered the months of September 1999 through February 2000. Many of the interventions implemented would be continued until the completion of the school year.

### September

I. Communication

A. Display weekly messages on outdoor school sign

B. Create a welcoming display in school lobby

C. Display a large school activity calendar in school lobby

D. Send weekly newsletter home

E. Distribute parental pledge

F. Have students design Open House invitations

G. Attend Open House - restructured for purpose of improved communication with families

H. Send Open House follow-up survey home

II. Volunteering

A. Distribute Volunteer Interest Inventory

B. Display holiday party sign up sheets at Open House

III. Parent Resources

Provide a list of resource materials available for checking out

## October

I. Communication

A. Display weekly messages on outdoor school marquis

B. Create a welcoming display in school lobby

C. Display a large school activity calendar in lobby

D. Send weekly newsletter home

E. Send invitations for Family Fun Night

F. Send informational letter regarding Halloween activities

G. Send home Parent-Teacher Conference notice and schedule

H. Distribute parent surveys

I. Send mid-term progress reports

II. Volunteering

A. Utilize parent helpers in classrooms

B. Send reminder notices to encourage parent attendance at Halloween activities.

III. Parent Resources

A. Provide a list of resource materials available to be checked out

B. Organize a Kindergarten You and Me Day

C. Provide take home activities related to the curriculum

## November

I. Communication

A. Display weekly messages on outdoor school marquis

B. Create a welcoming display for school lobby

C. Display a large school activity calendar in lobby

D. Send weekly newsletters home

E. Send invitations for Family Reading Night

F. Attend Family Reading Night

G. Send home Family Reading Night follow up surveys

H. Conduct Parent-Teacher Conferences

II. Volunteering

A. Utilize parent helpers in the classrooms

B. Seek parent volunteers for kindergarten Thanksgiving feast

III. Parent Resources

A. Provide a list of resource materials available to be checked out

B. Organize a Kindergarten You and Me Day

C. Provide take home activities related to the curriculum

D. Organize a parent workshop with district parent coordinator

## December

I. Communication

A. Display weekly messages on outdoor school marquis

B. Create a welcoming display in school lobby

C. Display a large school activity calendar in lobby

D. Send weekly newsletters home

E. Send invitations for holiday program

F. Attend holiday program

G. Send mid-term progress reports home

II. Volunteering

A. Utilize parent helpers in classrooms

B. Seek volunteers for holiday craft project

C. Seek volunteers to assist with wrapping holiday gifts

III. Parent Resources

A. Provide a list of resource materials available to be checked out

B. Organize a Kindergarten You and Me Day

C. Provide take home activities related to the curriculum

## January

I. Communication

A. Display weekly messages on outdoor school marquis

B. Create a welcoming display for school lobby

C. Display a large school activity calendar in lobby

D. Send weekly newsletter home

E. Organize a school wide skating party for staff and families

F. Send announcements regarding skating party

G. Organize a kindergarten parent luncheon

H. Have students design and send invitations for parent luncheon home

I. Send progress reports home

II. Volunteering

A. Utilize parent helpers in classrooms

B. Organize a parent career week - invite parents in to share their careers

III. Parent Resources

A. Provide a list of resource materials available to be checked out

B. Organize a Kindergarten You and Me Day

C. Provide take home activities related to the curriculum

D. Organize a parent workshop with district parent coordinator

### February

Send parent surveys home

## Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of the interventions regarding the parent involvement plan presented, surveys and questionnaires were developed. Attendance was recorded at school activities and a log of hours were kept of the classroom volunteers.

# CHAPTER 4

# PROJECT RESULTS

## Historical Description of the Intervention

The primary objective of this Action Plan was to increase parental involvement in the targeted kindergarten classrooms. Parents were offered more opportunities to become active participants in their child's education. The plan was designed to improve home/school communication, to create a welcoming school climate, and to establish parent resources. The intervention strategies included weekly newsletters sent home to develop better lines of communication, special school activities, opportunities designed to increase parent's willingness to participate, and providing information to assist families in helping their children at home.

The Action Plan was placed in effect beginning September 1999 to March 2000. During the first month the staff was asked to complete a survey concerning their perceptions about parent involvement at the targeted school. The following month, surveys were distributed to the parents and students of the targeted kindergarten classes. Results from the three surveys were tabulated.

In addition to the surveys, many attempts were made to connect to the parents in a positive manner. These included placing a banner in the lobby which read, "Welcome to

Ridgewood…a place where everyone is special!" and providing a kindergarten packet that contained parent information, a parent pledge, and a volunteer interest inventory.

At the initial faculty meeting held in September, plans were discussed to restructure the open house format previously used in the past. The purpose of restructuring was to improve the communication with families. The new format would consist of two 15 minute parent-teacher informational sessions with a 30 minute informal classroom visit. Due to lack of administrative follow-up, the staff felt they were not prepared to implement this new format.

Open house was held during the third week of the term. Thirty-nine out of a possible 44 kindergarten families attended, making it a successful event. The staff felt the new format would be a positive change if they were allowed more planning. The new format will be implemented the following year.

With the help of the parent sponsored Booster Club, a fall family festival was planned for the second week in October. Many games were planned for the students, as well as a haunted house, a costume contest, and a pumpkin carving contest. Due to a lack of parent volunteers, this event had not been held for two years at the targeted school. The large number of parent volunteers made it possible for the fall family festival to be held.

The targeted school hosted three family reading nights. The first used the theme "Bingo for Books." The evening consisted of numerous bingo games using free books as prizes. During intermissions between games, student-made reading commercials were performed by the second grade classes. Refreshments were provided and a reading

banner was signed by all of the participants and displayed in the school lobby the following day.

The second family reading night was held in November in conjunction with Illinois Reading Week. Many reading activities were planned around the theme of "pajama party." The students were encouraged to attend in their pajamas to hear storytellers and make their own bedtime books. Hot chocolate and cookies were provided and added to the enjoyment of the evening.

The third and final family reading night was held in the spring to coincide with Read Across America Week. Activities included a reading scavenger hunt, make and take projects and the school book fair. The breakdown of student attendance by grade level is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Family Reading Night Attendance by Grade Levels

| Grade | October Reading Night | November Reading Night | March Reading Night |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kindergarten | 6 | 11 | 12 |
| First | 4 | 3 | 10 |
| Second | 4 | 7 | 11 |
| Third | 5 | 9 | 10 |
| Fourth | 4 | 3 | 9 |
| Fifth | 4 | 10 | 8 |
| Sixth | 3 | 3 | 9 |

Evidence in the table found a higher attendance rate in the targeted kindergarten classrooms.

Parent-Teacher conferences were held during the month of November. In an attempt to accommodate all parents, conferences were scheduled from 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Ninety-eight percent of the targeted kindergarten parents attended conferences. Thank-you notes were sent home the following week. In an effort to support parents in helping their children at home, two kindergarten parent workshops were offered with the assistance of the district parent coordinator. These workshops were designed for the parents and children to attend together. Notices were sent home to inform parents of the scheduled workshop activities. The first workshop was held during the second week in February from 3:15 to 4:15. Emphasis was placed on retelling stories at home using story puppets. Participants were then involved in a make and take activity in which they made their own story puppets to use at home.

The second workshop was hosted during the second week in March from 3:15 to 4:15. This session was designed around a "Book-It, Cook-It" theme. After familiar children's books were shared with participants, coordinating snacks were demonstrated for each story, which were enjoyed by all.

With only eight out of a possible 44 families represented during both presentations, the attendance was less than expected. Although the comments received from those who attended were positive, many others expressed an interest in attending if the workshops had been offered in the evening. This suggestion will be considered when planning next year's event.

Centered around a "Family Theme," a parent luncheon was planned for the last week in February. The luncheon provided an opportunity to invite parents into the school for a positive and non-threatening experience. It was also considered to be an overall

success with 39 out of a possible 44 families represented and many positive comments from parents, students, and staff members.

The targeted school sponsored a school-wide skating party during the month of February from 5:00 to 7:00 P.M. To promote this activity, flyers were sent home, posters were displayed, and announcements were made over the school speaker system. This was the first party to be held in over six years and it was enjoyed by all that attended.

A Community Helpers unit planned for May will offer another opportunity to include parents in a positive school experience. Surveys were distributed to the parents to determine an interest and willingness on their part to share their occupations with the students. Fourteen out of a possible 44 parents have responded to this request.

A vigorous effort was made to connect the home and school through various forms of communication. These included weekly newsletters, homework activities, parent resource materials, reminder notices, invitations, and thank-you notes.

## Presentation and Analysis of Results

Two methods of assessment were used to ascertain the effects of the Action Plan. One of these methods was the attendance records obtained at various school events. Throughout the duration of the Action Plan, several family activities took place. Family participation was recorded through the use of collected sign-in sheets listing all present at each event. The results are indicated in Table 2.

Table 2

Kindergarten Family Participation Results

| Events | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Open House | 37 | 88% |
| Fall Festival | 34 | 81% |
| Family Reading Night I | 6 | 14% |
| Family Reading Night II | 11 | 26% |
| Family Reading Night III | 12 | 27% |
| Parent Conference | 41 | 98% |
| Parent Workshop I | 8 | 19% |
| Parent Workshop II | 8 | 19% |
| Parent Luncheon | 37 | 88% |
| Skating Party | 15 | 36% |
| Career Day | 14 | 33% |

An interesting note is the wide range of percentages of kindergarten family participation for the listed events. It should be noted that the activities that promoted specific academic enrichments were not as well attended as those which addressed specific academic goals.

Another prominent method of assessment was the utilization of surveys. Surveys were distributed to the faculty of the targeted school prior to the implementation of the Action Plan. Kindergarten students and parents of the targeted classes were surveyed prior to and at the conclusion of the Action Plan.

The staff of the targeted school was given a survey to completed to determine their views on parental involvement in education. All members of the faculty completed a survey. Results are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3

Staff Survey Results

| Inquiries | Agree Number | Agree Percent | Disagree Number | Disagree Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Involvement Influences Positive Behavior | 23 | 92% | 2 | 8% |
| Decline in Involvement | 25 | 100% | 0 | 0% |
| Parent's Attitudes Affect Involvement | 25 | 100% | 0 | 0% |
| Opportunities for Involvement | 20 | 88% | 5 | 12% |
| Parents are Well Informed | 17 | 76% | 8 | 24% |

It should be noted that the majority of the staff felt very strongly about the direct correlation between parental involvement and attitudes and student behavior. There were no responses recorded in the column marked NO OPINION.

The targeted kindergarten students were surveyed prior to the implementation of the Plan, using the same survey. Table 4 displays these results.

Table 4

Student Survey Results

| Inquiries | Initial Survey Yes | Initial Survey No | Post Survey Yes | Post Survey No |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Discuss School With Parents | 98% | 2% | 100% | 0% |
| Read Together At Home | 93% | 7% | 98% | 2% |
| Want Parents Involved | 98% | 2% | 98% | 2% |

Of particular interest is the rise of positive responses from the targeted kindergarten students on all inquiries at the conclusion of the Action Plan.

The parents of the targeted kindergarten classes were given a survey to complete the first week of October. Twenty-seven families out of a possible 42 chose to complete the survey. An identical survey was distributed to each family in the targeted kindergarten classes following completion of the Action Plan, 33 families completed this survey. The results of both surveys can be analyzed in Table 5 and 6.

Table 5

Initial Parent Survey Results

| Inquiries | 1 (least) | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 (greatest) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feel Welcome at School | 4% | 15% | 44% | 7% | 30% |
| Opportunities for Involvement | 4% | 19% | 48% | 7% | 22% |
| Frequency of Parent/ Child Communication | 0% | 33% | 37% | 15% | 15% |
| Frequency of Reading to Your Child | 0% | 33% | 37% | 19% | 11% |
| Parent School Experience | 15% | 37% | 22% | 11% | 15% |

Table 6

Post Parent Survey Results

| Inquiries | 1 (least) | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 (greatest) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feel Welcome at School | 0% | 0% | 10% | 45% | 45% |
| Opportunities for Involvement | 0% | 0% | 15% | 36% | 49% |
| Frequency of Parent/ Child Communication | 0% | 0% | 0% | 3% | 97% |
| Frequency of Reading to Your Child | 0% | 0% | 0% | 12% | 88% |

Parents were also surveyed regarding their feelings toward being adequately informed about school activities.

The results of the initial survey indicated that 63% of the parents that responded felt they were adequately informed. Thirty-seven percent felt they were not.

The post survey results indicated that 100% of the parents that responded felt adequately informed.

During the second week of school, a Parent Interest Inventory was distributed to the targeted kindergarten parents. Out of the 42 inventories sent out, 28 were returned. Of those who responded, 57% would be willing to donate time as parent helpers. Seventy-nine percent offered to supply needed materials for the class and 36% were willing to make phone calls. Making projects at home sounded favorable to 14% of the parents who responded and 46% were willing to assist on field trips. In addition to the surveys received, many other parents indicated a desire to help, but were unable because of work obligations.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The goal of implementing the Action Plan was to improve the school climate and strengthen the home-school bond. Based on the presentation and analysis of the data, parents responded in a positive way when opportunities for communicating, volunteering, and learning were provided.

During this time an intense effort was made to increase communication. Several new ideas were implemented to make positive contact between home and school. The following communication strategies worked well for the targeted kindergarten classrooms: Information packets, weekly newsletters, a school calendar and welcoming

sign displayed in the lobby. Many parents responded favorably to the weekly newsletters, stating that it was a useful tool in discussing daily events with their children. After viewing the welcoming display in the lobby, many staff members mentioned an interest and willingness to continue creating future displays.

In order to meet the needs of as many families as possible, numerous and varied opportunities must be offered. To facilitate the organization of parent volunteers a volunteer interest survey was distributed. Upon review of the interest surveys, specific opportunities for volunteers were offered.

With the help of parent volunteers, it was possible to hold a fall festival after a two year absence. It is recommended that parent interest surveys be utilized in the future to develop opportunities correlated to parent strengths.

The final goal of the Action Plan was to assist families in helping their children at home. Family Reading Nights provided excellent opportunities for parents and children to engage in learning activities together. Parents expressed appreciation for the opportunities provided for spending quality time with their children. It was determined that, in order for future reading nights to be successful, total support of the staff is needed.

Two kindergarten parent workshops were offered. This event could not be considered a success. The low attendance at both workshops indicated time constraints for working parents. It is recommended that when planning future parent workshops, conducting evening workshops would help to accommodate working parents.

In order to broaden and strengthen parent involvement in education, the interventions must be enduring and meaningful. The expectations must be clear and

defined, and the lines of communication must remain open and constant between all participants. The effect of the Action Plan has been felt only toward the targeted kindergarten classrooms and their families. In order for such a plan to be most effective, it should be implemented throughout the entire school population. Parents need to be valued as an active participant in education and will respond when provided relevant opportunities.

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# Appendix A

## Staff Survey

## Staff Survey – Parental Involvement in Education

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | No Opinion |
|---|---|---|---|---|

1. Parental involvement influences student behavior in a positive manner.
COMMENTS: _____
_____

2. There has been a decline in parents' involvement with their child's education throughout the past five years.
COMMENTS: _____
_____

3. Parents' attitudes toward school affect their involvement in the school.
COMMENTS: _____
_____

4. Parents are offered adequate opportunities to become in involved in school activities.
COMMENTS: _____
_____

5. Parents are kept very well informed about what is happening at school.
COMMENTS: _____
_____

THANKS FOR TAKING THE TIME!

# Appendix B

Parent Survey

# PARENT SURVEY

1. **ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE WELCOME YOU RECEIVED AT THIS SCHOOL?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dissatisfied | | Satisfied | | Very Satisfied |

2. **DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU ARE ADEQUATELY INFORMED ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENNING AT THIS SCHOOL?**

_____ Yes _____ No

3. **HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ACTIVITIES AT THIS SCHOOL?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dissatisfied | | Satisfied | | Very Satisfied |

4. **HOW OFTEN DO YOU TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENNING AT SCHOOL?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Seldom | | Occasionally | | Daily |

5. **HOW OFTEN DO YOU AND YOUR CHILD READ TOGETHER AT HOME?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Seldom | | Occasionally | | Daily |

6. **HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR OWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rather Negative | | | | Very Positive |

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY !!!!

# Appendix C

## Student Survey

## Student Survey

1. Do you talk to your parents about school? YES NO

2. Do you and your parents read together at home? YES NO

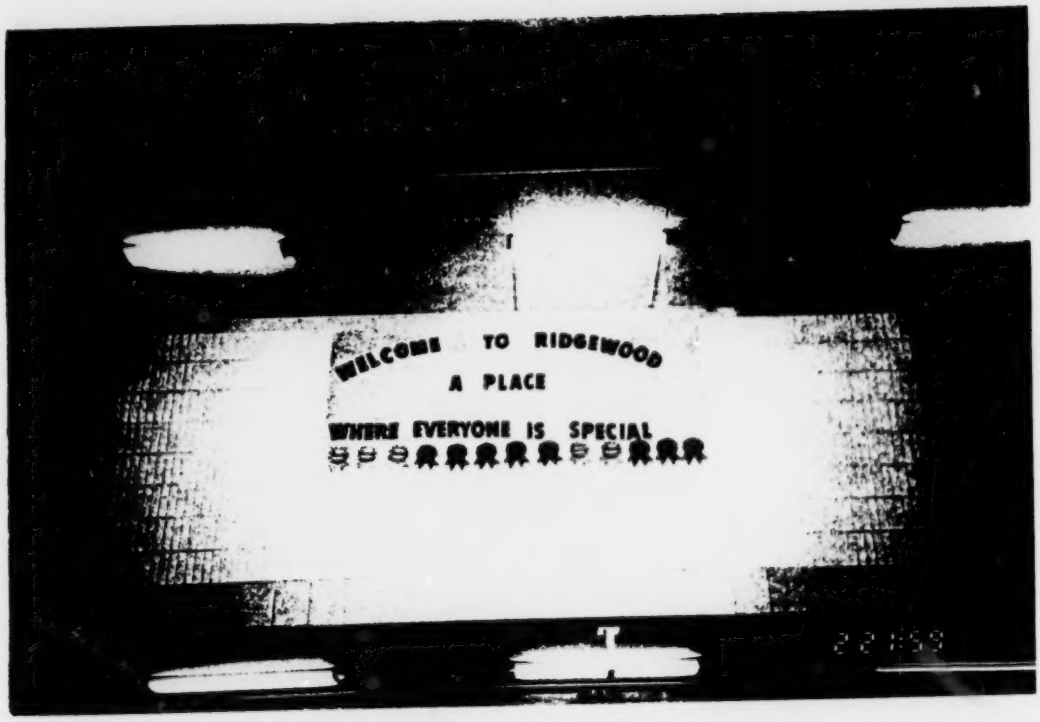
3. Would you like your parents to see what you are doing at school? YES NO

4. How do you feel about school?

Name_____

# Appendix D

Picture of Banner

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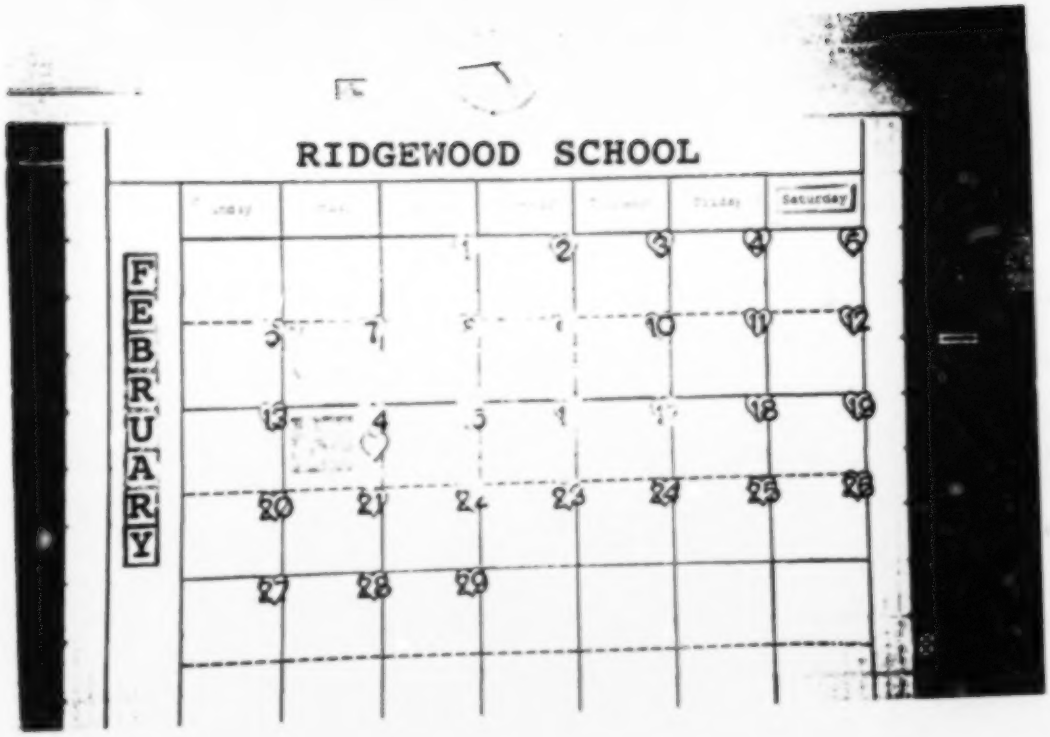
# Appendix E

Picture of School Calendar

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# Appendix F

Picture of Outdoor Sign

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# Appendix G

Information Packets

# Parent Information

# What Is Expected Of Parents?

Here are some tips to strengthen the home and school bond:

Send your child off to school every morning clean, healthy, rested, suitably dressed, adequately nourished and in a frame of mind to learn.

Treat school as important. That you are interested in every phase of what your child does there - and let your child know your interest and concern by listening enthusiastically, and often, to them and by participating in school activities.

Teach your child to respect and cooperate with the teacher and other students.

Help prepare your child to learn in school by enriching their lives with suitable experiences, by talking to them, by listening to them, by reading to them, and by loving them.

Reinforce reasonable standards of conduct at home.

Keep in contact with the school by reading flyers and notes. Call the school if you ever have any questions.

Handle information given to you about your child with discretion. That you don't broadcast their faults or brag about their virtues in public.

Support the school in its decisions about homework, safety rules, and discipline.

That you be an interested, informed and intelligent partner with the school in the education of your child.

Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from the New Albany Gazette. Its author is a retired elementary school principal.

# Suggestions For Parents

Create a happy and positive attitude toward school so that the child anticipates with pleasure his school experiences.

Provide opportunities for the child to develop and carry out their own ideas in their play and to participate in family group activities, such as daily tasks and responsibilities and solve problems. Ask, "What could you do?" before giving your answer.

Help the child to realize that they are one in a family group, and that there are times when others need more attention than they do.

Provide opportunities for your child to play with others their own age.

Explain that the teacher, principal and all adults connected with the school are their friends. Parents should never threaten children by telling then what the teacher or principal will do to them when they start school.

Take your child to as many worthwhile places in the community as possible, such as, the zoo, library, park, airport, farm or concerts.

Discourage "baby talk" and promote independence.

Get acquainted with the teacher. Discuss common problems and work together. Remember we are both interested in the same thing - your child. It is important for us to know if your child has any problems, worries, or restrictions.

Read to your child and discuss the pictures in the books. Listen when your child talks, and answer them in sentences. Encourage your child to speak in sentences rather than a single word.

Encourage and expect your child to be responsible for their possessions and also their behavior.

# First Quarter Expectations

## READING

E - Can identify 22 or more upper and lower case letters

M - Can identify 7 upper and lower case letters

N - Knows less than 7 upper and lower case letters

## Writing

E - Can print first name properly (first letter is a capital, no reversals, and no Omissions.

M - Can print first name

N - Can not print first name

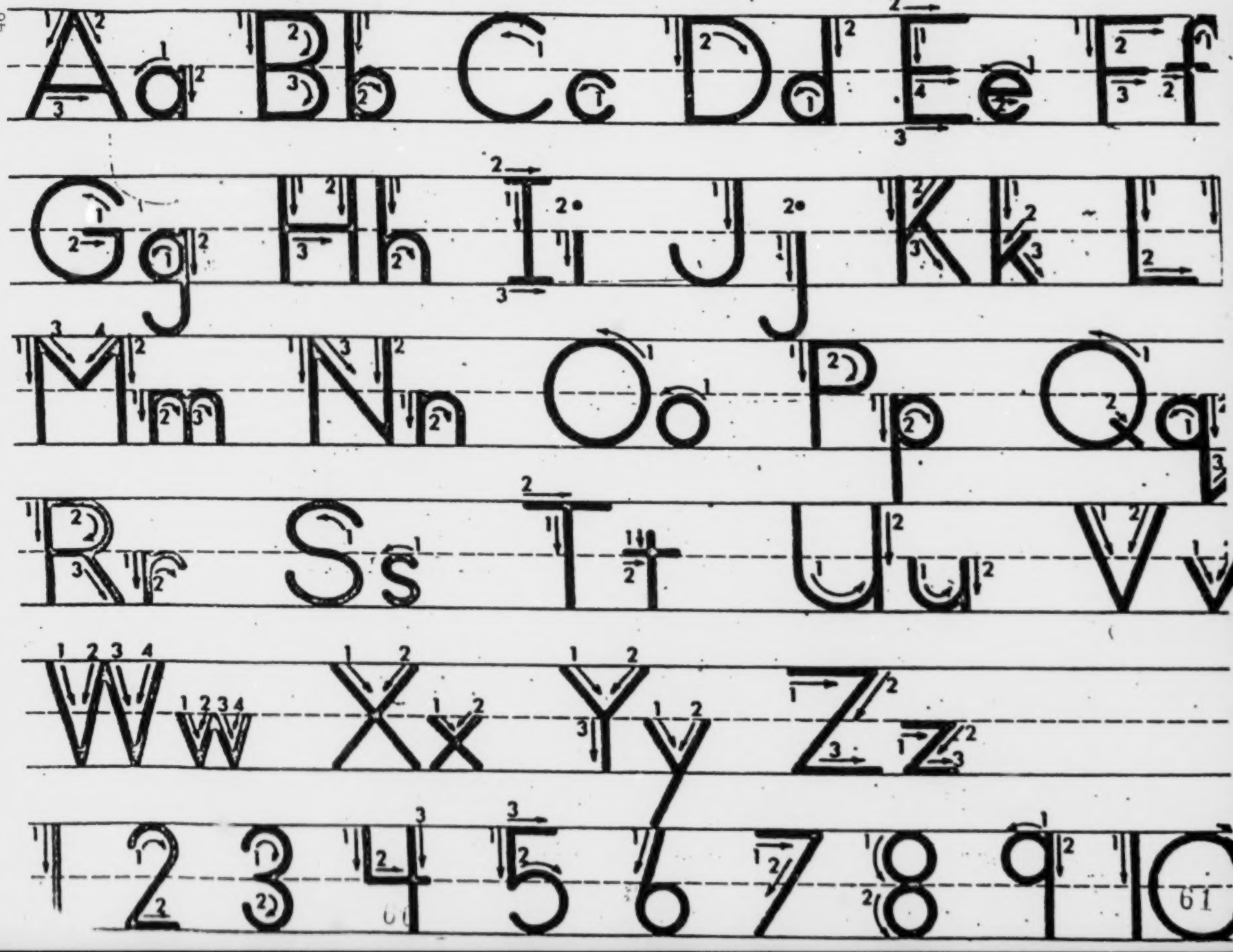
E = Exceeds expectations
M = Meets expectations
N = Not meeting expectations

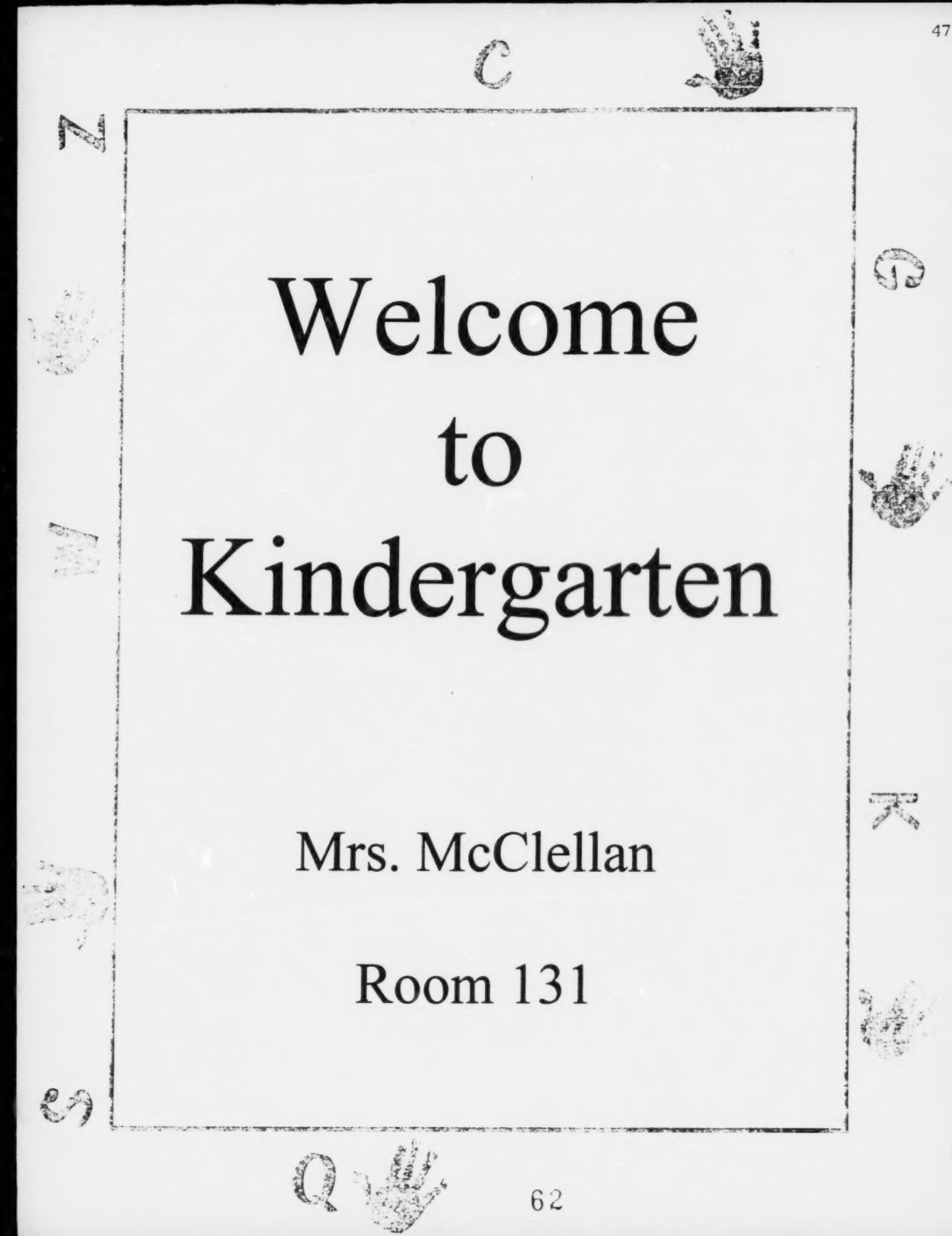
## Math

E - Can count higher than 25
Can name 3 or more shapes
Can recognize and name more than the numbers 0-5

M - Can count up to 25
Can name 2 basic shapes
Can recognize and name numbers 0-5

N - Can not count to 25
Can not name 2 basic shapes
Can not recognize and name numbers 0-5


A a B b C c D d E e F f
G g H h I i J j K k L
M m N n O o P p Q q
R r S s T t U u V v
W w X x Y y Z z
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



# Welcome to Kindergarten

Mrs. McClellan

Room 131

## A Little Bit About Myself:

Hello, welcome to kindergarten. My name is Kim McClellan and this is my fifth year at Ridgewood. This is my fourth year teaching kindergarten and I am very excited about the upcoming year. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call me or stop by the room. I am looking forward to working with you and your child to make this a most productive and fun school year.

## Class Rules:

The following rules are posted in our class and reviewed daily, please discuss these rules with your child:

1. Be kind to everyone
2. Be a good listener
3. Keep your hands to yourself
4. Raise your hand
5. Follow directions

I have set up a "stop sign" in the classroom where all of the children's names start every day on the green light. After two warnings they are moved to the yellow light, where they lose free time. If they are moved to the red light a note is sent or I will call home. For all of the students who remain on the green light all week, they will be rewarded with a special treat on Friday, and free time at the end of each day.

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## Our Schedule:

This is a very tentative schedule, but it gives you an idea of how our day goes:

| | |
|---|---|
| 8:35 - 9:15 | Attendance/ Lunch Count<br>Calendar<br>Daily Message |
| 9:15 - 9:45 | Language Arts |
| 9:45 - 10:15 | Restroom Break<br>Snack Time |
| 10:15 - 10:30 | Morning Recess |
| 10:30 - 10:50 | Handwriting/ Letter Skills |
| 10:50 - 12:00 | Centers |
| 12:00 - 12:30 | Lunch |
| 12:30 - 1:00 | Afternoon Recess |
| 1:00 - 1:30 | Restroom Break<br>Read Aloud<br>Rest Time |
| 1:30 - 2:00 | Math |
| 2:00 - 2:15 | Clean Up |
| 2:15 - 2:45 | Gym/ Music |
| 2:55 | Dismiss |

*** Computer Lab and Library times to be announced ***

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## Snack Schedule:

Everyday your child is given a snack. I have enclosed a calendar that shows the day your child is to bring the snack for the day. Snacks can be cookies, crackers, etc... please do not send candy. If bringing a snack to school is a problem just let me know.

## Lunch:

If your child would like to buy hot lunch they will need to bring $1.15 (this includes milk). I will collect all money at the start of the day. If your child would like to purchase lunch tickets for the week they are $5.75.

If your child brings their lunch please put their name on their lunch box or sack. Milk can be purchased for $.25.

## Birthdays:

On your child's birthday you may send a birthday treat to share with the class. As of right now we have 22 students. We will make a special birthday book for your child to bring home so be sure to look for this. Also all summer birthdays will be celebrated at the end of the school year.

Please do not send any birthday invitations to school; it causes too many hard feelings.

## Newsletter:

Every Friday I will be sending home a brief weekly newsletter with highlights of the events at school for that week. Please check your child's book bag for this.

## Show and Tell:

We will have a show and tell every Friday morning. Please have your child bring their item in a bag. Do not send anything breakable.

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## How Does Your Child Get Home?

Would you please send me a note stating if your child is a bus rider, walker, or car rider. Also let me know if your child is to attend the after school program here at Ridgewood. This helps me so much at the end of the day when the children leave school.

## Dismissal:

The kindergarten classes will dismiss at 2:55. We dismiss out of the doors we line up at in the mornings. Your child will remain in this area until their ride arrives.

## Notes for me:

If you need to send me a note please pin it to your child's shirt. They seem to never find their way out of those book bags.

## Volunteers:

I welcome anyone into the classroom. If you would like to volunteer just let me know when you are available. I am very flexible; I am just fortunate to have the help.

I hope I haven't overwhelmed you with all of this information. If you have any other questions, please call me at school or stop by the room. I am looking forward to talking with you.

**Mrs. McClellan**

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# Appendix H

## Parent Pledge

# RIDGEWOOD SCHOOL

## *PARTNERS IN LEARNING*

Student * Parent * Teacher * Principal

We know that learning can take place only when there is a combination of effort, interest, and motivation. This agreement is a promise to work together. Together we can improve teaching and learning.

### A GREAT EDUCATION IS OUR GOAL

**As a student I pledge to:**

Be at school daily, ready to learn.
Try to do my best in my school assignments.
Do homework when I have it, and bring it back to school.
Be respectful to other people, their opinions, their efforts, and their property.
Be responsible for delivering notes to home and to school.
Read and study at home daily.
Work to resolve conflicts in positive ways.

Signature of Student Date

**As parent/guardian I pledge to:**

See that my child gets to school on time each day, well rested and ready to learn.
Encourage my child to read by reading to my child, by having my child read to me, and reading myself.
Provide a quiet study time at home and encourage good study habits.
Encourage my child's efforts and be aware of what my child is learning.
Provide a library card for my child and visit the library to check out books.
Attend conferences and school functions to find ways to become involved in my child's classroom.
Limit my child's TV viewing and help select and monitor worthwhile programs.
Support the school in its efforts to maintain proper discipline.
Help my child resolve conflicts in positive ways.

Signature of Parent Date

**As a teacher I pledge to:**

Provide motivating and interesting learning experiences in my classroom.
Explain my expectations, instructional goals and grading system to students and parents.
Communicate and cooperate with each parent to ensure the best education possible for all students.
Provide necessary assistance to parents so that they can help with assignments.
Maintain high expectations for myself, Ridgewood students, and other staff.
Have a positive attitude toward students, parents, curriculum, and change for the good of all.
Find out what techniques and materials work best for the students.
Help the student to resolve conflict in positive ways.

Kim McClellan 9/8/99
Signature of Teacher Date

**As a principal I pledge to:**

Ensure a safe, orderly learning environment.
Reinforce the partnership between parent, student, and staff.
Act as instructional leader by supporting teachers in their classrooms.
Empower parents by offering opportunities to become involved in the learning process.
Create a welcoming environment that allows for positive communication between the teacher, parent, and student.

9/8/99
Signature of Principal Date

**MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE PROMISE TO HELP EACH OTHER CARRY OUT THIS AGREEMENT.**



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# Appendix I

Interest Inventory Survey

# Parent Interest Inventory

Dear Parent,

It is helpful for me to gather information about my students' parents for upcoming projects and events. I value your interests and expertise, and I encourage you to share talents with us. Please complete the form below and return it to school as soon as possible. Thanks!

Mrs. Anderson & Mrs. McClellan

---

Parent_____ Child_____

I can contribute by:

___ being a parent helper ___ making projects at home

___ supplying materials ___ going on field trips

___ making phone calls ___ other

# Appendix J

Parent Workshop Notice

# Attention:

## Parents/Guardians of Kindergarten Students

We have scheduled two meetings to share the fun of learning in Kindergarten! You will receive materials to make helping your child at home enjoyable for the whole family!

**Wednesday, February 16**
**and**
**Monday, March 6**
**3:15 - 4:15 p.m.**

***

# Appendix K

Fall Family Festival Notice

# Fall Family Festival

Ridgewood Elementary School

Sat. Oct. 16

3:00 pm-5:00pm

Haunted House, Raffle,
Bake Sale, Games,
Costume Contest, Food,
and Pumpkin Carving
Contest

Volunteers are needed to make this a fun family day for our children. Donations are needed for the bake sale. If you can help Please call Sue at 787-0251 or Lorrie at 787-0123.

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# FALL FAMILY FESTIVAL UPDATE

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16 3PM TO 5 PM**

DONATIONS ARE NEEDED FOR THE BAKE SALE,

2 LITER BOTTLES OF POP FOR THE POP WALK GAME,

AND SMALL CONTAINERS WITH LIDS SUCH AS MARG-

ERINE DISHES, PEANUT CANS, KOOLAID CONTAINERS

FOR THE PUMPKIN CONTEST.

PLEASE RETURN THE BOTTOM SLIP OF PAPER TO SCHOOL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. DONATIONS OF POP AND CONTAINERS CAN BE BROUGHT TO THE OFFICE ANYTIME. BAKE SALE ITEMS CAN BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL FRIDAY, OCT. 15. THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!

---

YES, I CAN HELP!

NAME_____PHONE #_____

I CAN DONATE _____2 LITER(S) OF POP
_____ TO THE BAKE SALE

I CAN WORK THE FESTIVAL 75
_____ GAME _____RAFFLE _____FOOD
_____ HAUNTED HOUSE _____ NO PREFERENCE

# Appendix L

First Family Reading Night Announcement

# SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

## OCTOBER

## REMINDERS:

- Family Reading Night "BINGO for Books" is Thursday October 21ST 6:30-8:00.
- 12:00 dismissal on Monday October 25th
- Our Halloween parade & party will be Friday October 29th at 2:00.

Mrs. McClellan

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# Appendix M

Second Family Reading Night Announcement

# Ridgewood Family Reading Night

November 16, 1999 Tuesday, 6:30 - 8:00

Come to Ridgewood's Annual Storytime . Wear your pajamas or comfortable clothes. We'll read and listen to stories and have cookies and milk before you go home to bed. Special guests will be here to share their favorite books with you. If you'd like to join us, please return the slip below to the office as soon as possible so we can order the cookies!

Save this top part as a reminder.

---

☺ _____Yes, we can come!

How many parents?_____How many children?_____

Circle 2 kinds of cookies that you like.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| chocolate chip | peanut butter | sugar | oatmeal raisin | m&m |

Parent's name_____

Child(ren)'s name(s)_____

_____

# Appendix N

Third Family Reading Night Announcement

# READ ACROSS AMERICA and FAMILY NIGHT

**Read Across America Day is Thursday, March 2. *Read Across America* is a national campaign to encourage and promote reading and reading activities. One activity to try is TV Turn-Off Day. Turn off the TV for one day (at least) and spend the time reading a good book or two, reading to each other, or telling about your favorite stories.

**Thurs., Mar. 2 is the birthday of Theodore Geisel (better known as Dr. Seuss). Students may experience the many stories he has written as well as eating green eggs and ham for breakfast. In honor of Seuss, we'll be giving each child a RIF book of their choice. The students may wear "Seuss" or red, white and blue. A school assembly is planned, and the River Bandits' mascot, Rookie Raccoon, will be here to encourage reading and joining the Rookie Reading Club. Students will be given a free ticket to the May 7th game and pre-game parade when they have met their Rookie Racoon reading goal.

**To further celebrate reading, there will be a Family Reading Night with fun activities and refreshments on Thursday, March 2 from 6:30 to 8:00.

——Only students with an adult will be able to join us for Family Night.——

xxx RIF= Reading Is Fundamental xxx

# Appendix O

Parent Conference Thank You

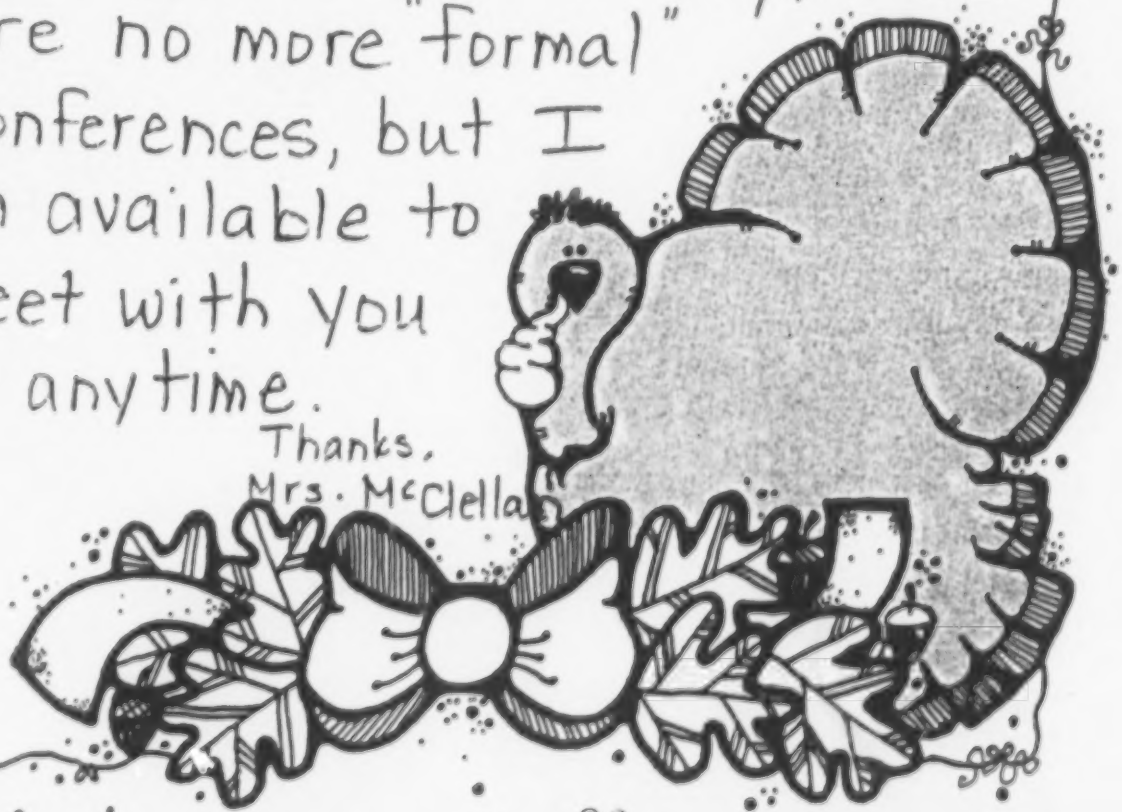
# I'm Thankful for...

Terrific parents like you!

Thank you for attending parent/teacher conferences.

I really enjoyed meeting and discussing your child's progress with you. Unfortunately, there are no more "formal" conferences, but I am available to meet with you at anytime.

Thanks,
Mrs. McClella



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# Appendix P

## Parent Luncheon Announcement

# V.I.P. Lunch

Bring a very important person to join us for lunch.

Date: February 23rd

Time: 12:00 - 12:30

Place: Ridgewood Cafeteria

Please choose someone special that you would like to have lunch with. This can be a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, special friend, etc. We will meet in the cafeteria. The visitor will need to bring their own lunch. Because of limited space, please do not bring toddlers.

Please fill out the attached form and return to school no later than February 11th.

Thank You,

Mrs. McClellan
Mrs. Anderson

_____ will bring
Child's name

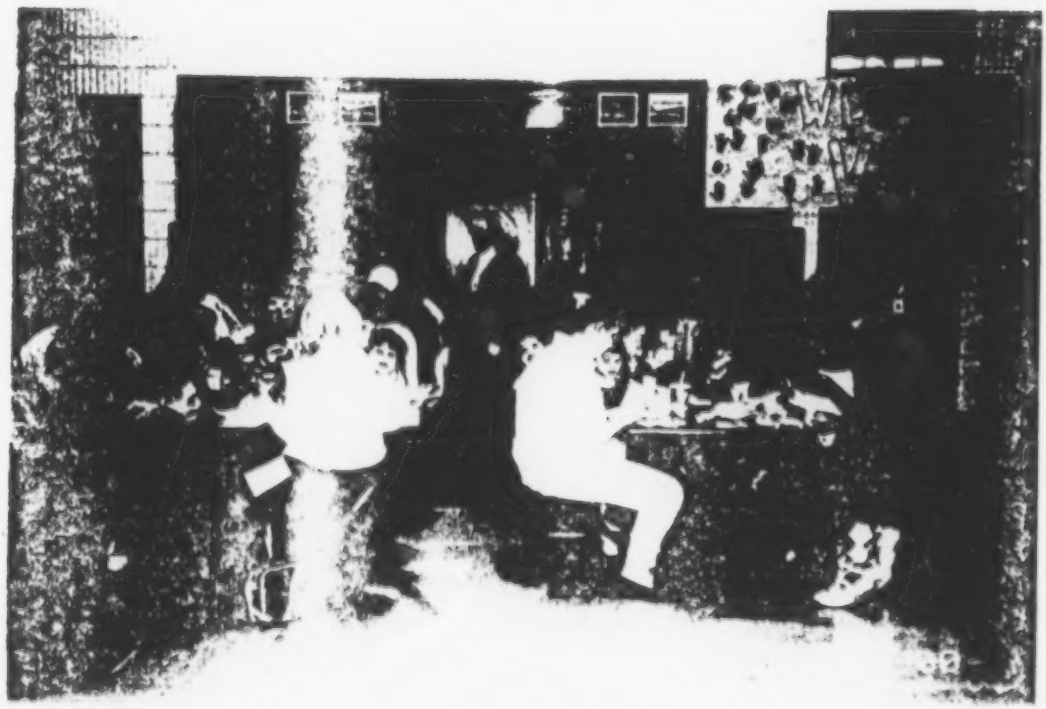
_____ to eat lunch
Visitor's name

At school on February 23rd from 12:00 to 12:30.

# Appendix Q

Pictures of Parent Luncheon

WELCOME
V.I.P.



# Appendix R

Skating Party Announcement

# RIDGEWOOD SCHOOL

# SKATING PARTY

## SKATE RANCH

FRIDAY FEB 25, 2000

5:00 TO 7:00

ADMISSION $2.50

SKATE RENTAL $1.00

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PLEASE DO NOT WEAR SKATES WHILE
ENTERING AND LEAVING

# Appendix S

Pictures of Skating Party

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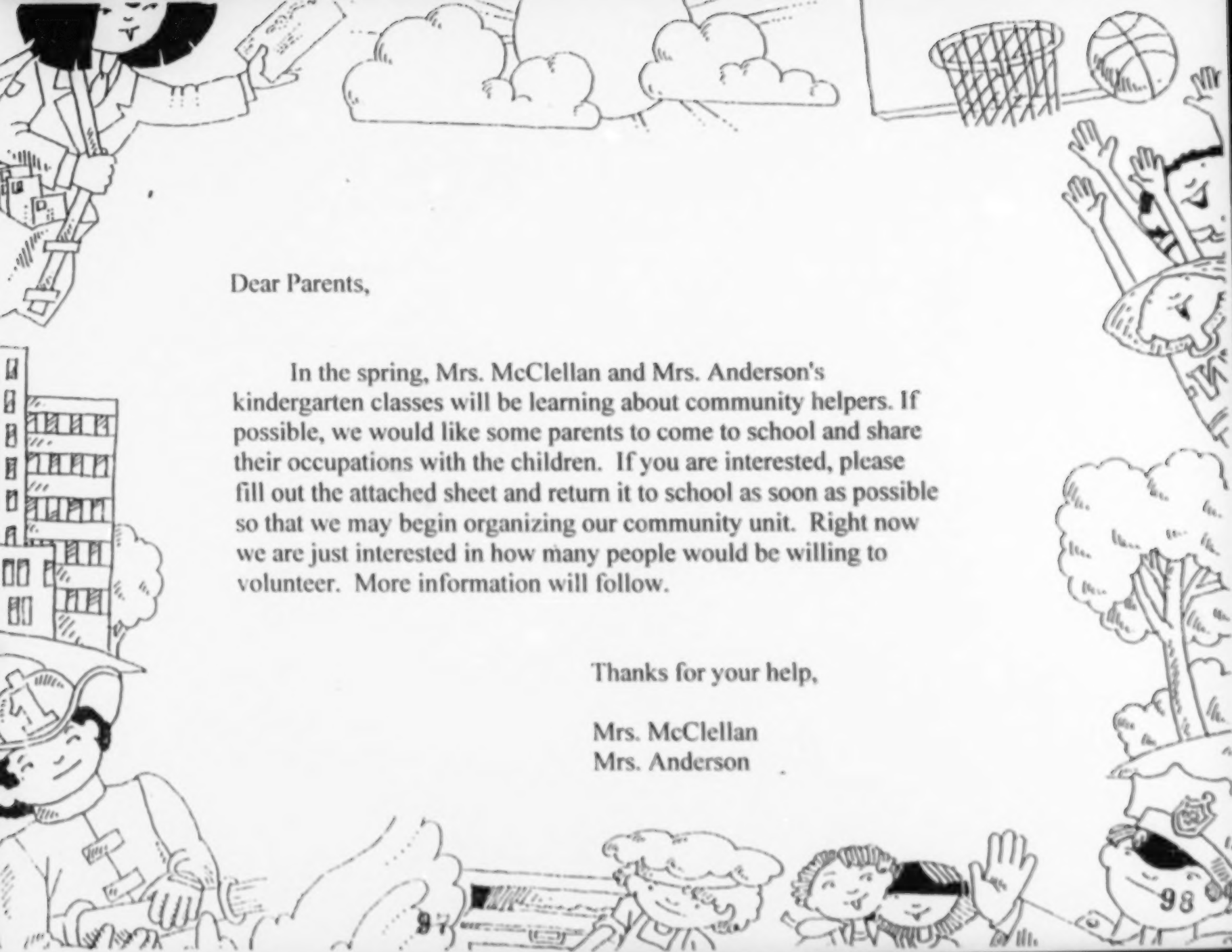
# Appendix T

Career Day Announcement



Dear Parents,

In the spring, Mrs. McClellan and Mrs. Anderson's kindergarten classes will be learning about community helpers. If possible, we would like some parents to come to school and share their occupations with the children. If you are interested, please fill out the attached sheet and return it to school as soon as possible so that we may begin organizing our community unit. Right now we are just interested in how many people would be willing to volunteer. More information will follow.

Thanks for your help,

Mrs. McClellan
Mrs. Anderson

Yes, I am interested in sharing my occupation with the kindergarten classes.

Name

Occupation

Yes, I am interested in sharing my occupation with the kindergarten classes.

Name

Occupation

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# Appendix U

Weekly Newsletter

**Kindergarten Weekly News**

**Week Of** October 4-8th

**Monday** We started our Fall theme by making a list of Fall words. We read I Am A Leaf. We decorated leaves and hung them on a tree in our classroom. We learned that circles are round with no sides or points

**Tuesday** We read Max and Maggie in Autumn and made Fall trees with colored squares. We did a color by number leaf picture. We learned that squares have 4 sides that are the same. We cut out squares from magazine

**Wednesday** We went to an assembly to see a puppet show about fire safety. We learned about stop, drop & roll & about how helpful smoke detectors are. We made books about visiting a fire station. We learned triangles have 3 sides. We went to library.

**Thursday** We read Autumn & Red Leaf Yellow Leaf. We took a walk & collected Fall items. We glued our Fall things on a paper plate & did leaf rubbings. We learned that rectangles have 4 sides - 2 long and 2 short. We celebrated India's birthday.

**Friday** Today was show & tell. We learned a song "Autumn Leaves Are Falling Down" & made books to share at home. We also made I See Shapes books with the 4 shapes we learned this week.



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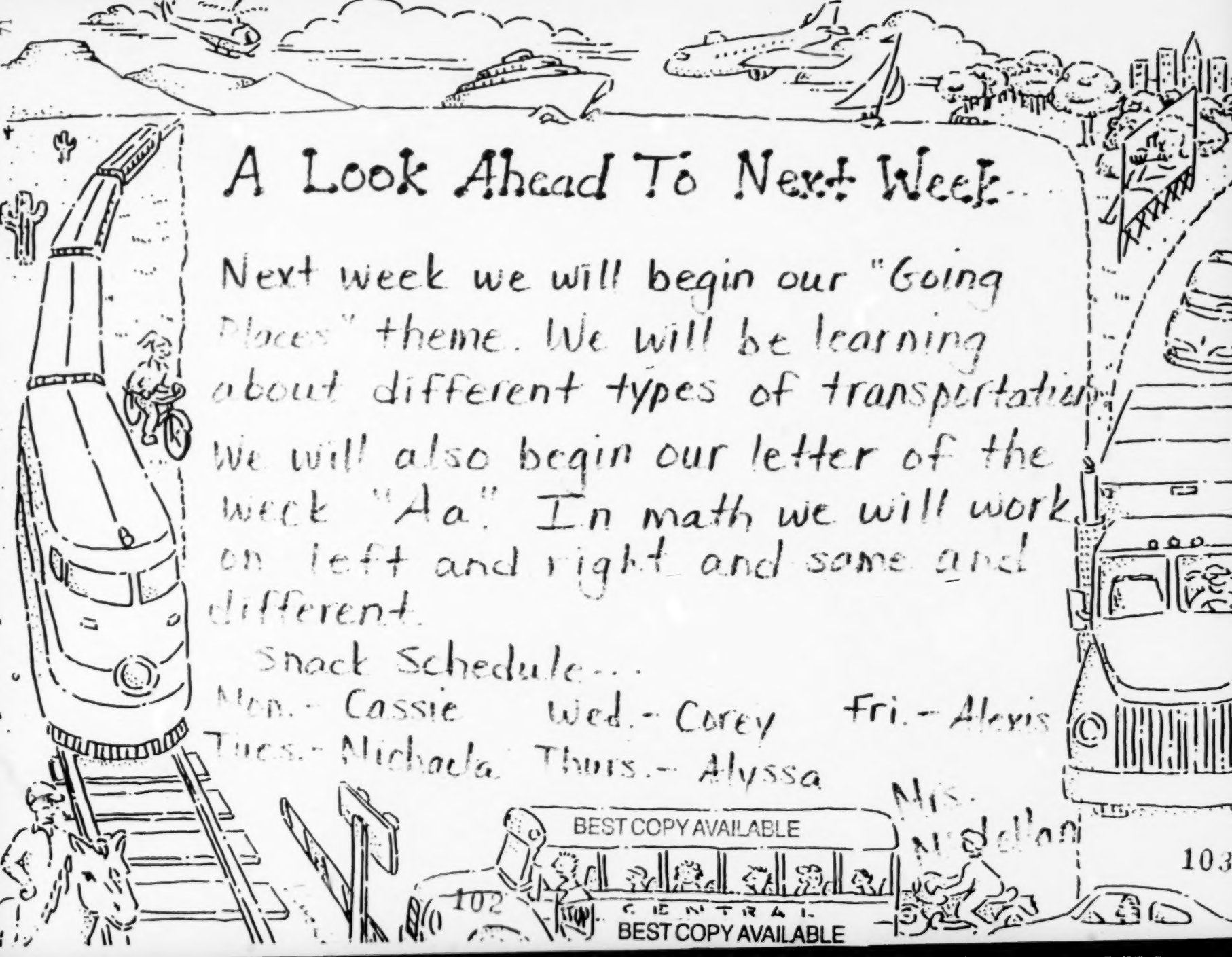

# A Look Ahead To Next Week...

Next week we will begin our "Going Places" theme. We will be learning about different types of transportation. We will also begin our letter of the week "Aa". In math we will work on left and right and same and different.

Snack Schedule...

Mon.- Cassie Wed.- Corey Fri.- Alexis
Tues.- Michaela Thurs.- Alyssa

Mrs. Middleton

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# Appendix V

Homework Activity

# HOMEWORK

We are working on letter Aa this week. To help reinforce letter Aa recognition please help your child write the names of their family members on the piece of paper provided. After the names have been written have your child circle all of the Aa's. Count the Aa's and write the total at the top.

Also have your child share My Aa Book with you tonight.

Mrs. McClellan

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# Appendix W

Parent Resource Idea

# Dear Parents,

## Did You Know?

Your child experiences more than a fun time when you read aloud to him or her. As you read, your child makes the connection between the spoken and written word, learns new vocabulary, and sees good reading techniques. A great way to demonstrate good reading techniques as you read aloud is to use "echo reading." Try the following echo-reading activity, and watch your child go!

## How You Can Help

1. Choose a book both you and your child will enjoy.
2. Place your child on your lap or in front of you.
3. Position your mouth directly behind one of his or her ears.
4. Invite your child to read the book aloud with you. As you read, whisper each word into his or her ear (at a regular reading pace), allowing your child to read aloud and echo your words. Your child's "echoes" should occur at (or at almost) the same time as your original reading.
5. Use "echo reading" whenever your child wants to read a difficult or new book to you.

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